

U.S. Serial No. 10/705,411
Response to Restriction Requirement and Preliminary Amendment
January 30, 2006

Page 6 of 11

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 9-15 from further consideration herein.

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A particulate storage combination comprising
a case element having an opening

and

a detachable valved lid element

said case element and said lid element being configured such that said lid element is removably attached to said case element so as to cover said opening and form an enclosed space for containing a particulate substance,

said lid element comprising a valve member having an outflow aperture and defining a flow path for the flow of particulate material out of said enclosed space, said valve member further comprising a plug element and a bias component, said plug element and said bias component being configured such that said plug element is displacable between a closed position and an open position whereby when said plug element is in said closed position said plug closes off said outflow aperture whereby particulate material is unable to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture and when said plug element is in said open position particulate material is able to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture, said bias element biasing said plug element in said closed position, and
wherein said lid element comprises an orientation guide means.

2. (Original) A storage combination as defined in claim 1 wherein said valve member is a valved spout member.

U.S. Serial No. 10/705,411
Response to Restriction Requirement and Preliminary Amendment
January 30, 2006

Page 7 of 11

3. (Original) A storage combination as defined in claim 1 wherein said enclosed space contains a particulate milk substance.

4. (Original) A storage combination as defined in claim 1 comprising a valve plug interaction element for releasably maintaining said plug in said open position.

5. (Currently Amended) A conveyance system for conveying or dispensing a particulate substance from a removable particulate storage component to a predetermined location or station,

wherein said removable particulate storage component comprises a valved wall element and is configured to define an enclosed space for containing a particulate substance,

said valved wall element comprising a valve member defining an outflow aperture for providing a flow path for the flow of particulate material out of said enclosed space, said valve member further comprising a plug element and a bias element, said plug and bias elements being configured such that said plug is displacable between a closed position and an open position whereby when said plug is in said closed position said plug closes off said outflow aperture whereby particulate substance is unable to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture and when said plug is in said open position particulate substance is able to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture,

said conveyance system assembly comprising
a particulate delivery component,

wherein said particulate delivery component comprises a conveyor element for conveying particulate substance from the replaceable particulate storage component to said predetermined station, and wherein said particulate delivery component further comprises an interconnect element for releasably interconnecting the conveyor element and the outflow aperture of said valve member for the flow of particulate substance through the outflow aperture to the conveyor element.

U.S. Serial No. 10/705,411
Response to Restriction Requirement and Preliminary Amendment
January 30, 2006

Page 8 of 11

6. (Currently Amended) A conveyance system as defined in claim 5 wherein said particulate delivery component comprises a valve plug interaction element for releasably maintaining said the plug element of said valve member in said open position.

7. (Currently Amended I) A conveyance system as defined in claim 5 wherein said conveyance system further comprises a support component, and wherein said support component is configured for releasably engaging said removable storage component such that the storage component is oriented so that the valved wall member at least partially forms the bottom of the so engaged storage component.

8. (Currently Amended) An conveyance system as defined in claim 5 wherein said conveyance system comprises said removable particulate storage component.

9. – 15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) A detachable valved lid element for covering an opening of a case element

 said lid element being configured to co-operate with said case element such that said lid element is removably attachable to said case element so as to cover said opening and form an enclosed space for containing a particulate substance,

 said lid element comprising a valve member having an outflow aperture and defining a flow path for the flow of particulate material out of said enclosed space, said valve member further comprising a plug element and a bias component, said plug element and said bias component being configured such that said plug element is displacable between a closed position and an open position whereby when said plug element is in said closed position said plug closes off said outflow aperture whereby particulate material is unable to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture and when said plug

U.S. Serial No. 10/705,411
Response to Restriction Requirement and Preliminary Amendment
January 30, 2006

Page 9 of 11

element is in said open position particulate material is able to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture, said bias element biasing said plug element in said closed position, and

wherein said lid element comprises an orientation guide means.

17. (New) A storage combination as defined in claim 1 wherein said orientation guide means comprises an orientation guide projection.

18. (New) A lid element as defined in claim 16 wherein said orientation guide means comprises an orientation guide projection.

19. (New) A beverage machine for dispensing a beverage, said beverage machine comprising a mixing station communicating with a dispensing station, a particulate delivery component for delivery of particulate substance from a removable particulate storage component to said mixing station, and an aqueous medium delivery means for delivering aqueous medium to said mixing station,

wherein said removable particulate storage component comprises a valved wall element and is configured to define an enclosed space for containing a particulate substance,

said valved wall element comprising a valve member defining an outflow aperture for providing a flow path for the flow of particulate material out of said enclosed space, said valve member further comprising a plug element and a bias element, said plug and bias elements being configured such that said plug is displacable between a closed position and an open position whereby when said plug is in said closed position said plug closes off said outflow aperture whereby particulate substance is unable to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture and when said plug is in said open position particulate substance is able to flow out of said enclosed space through said outflow aperture,

characterized in that said beverage machine comprises a conveyance system, wherein said conveyance system comprises

said particulate delivery component,

wherein said particulate delivery component comprises a conveyor element for

U.S. Serial No. 10/705,411
Response to Restriction Requirement and Preliminary Amendment
January 30, 2006

Page 10 of 11

conveying particulate substance from the replaceable particulate storage component to said mixing station, and wherein said particulate delivery component further comprises an interconnect element for releasably interconnecting the conveyor element and the outflow aperture of said valve member for the flow of particulate substance through the outflow aperture to the conveyor element.

20. (New) A beverage machine as defined in claim 19 wherein said particulate delivery component comprises a valve plug interaction element for releasably maintaining the plug element of said valve member in said open position.

21. (New) A beverage machine as defined in claim 19 wherein said conveyance system further comprises a support component, and

wherein said support component is configured for releasably engaging said removable storage component such that the storage component is oriented so that the valved wall member at least partially forms the bottom of the so engaged storage component.

22. (New) An conveyance system as defined in claim 19 wherein said conveyance system comprises said removable particulate storage component.

23. (New) A beverage machine as defined in claim 19 wherein said particulate substance is a particulate milk substance.